



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 June 2023

by Debbie Moore BSc (HONS), MCD, PGDip, MRTPI, IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 June 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/C2741/Y/22/3311295

St Peters Farmhouse, Main Street, Knapton, York YO26 6QG

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Alan Lumb against the decision of City of York Council.
 - The application Ref 22/01149/LBC, dated 31 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 6 September 2022.
 - The works proposed are to “install through-floor lift”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and listed building consent is granted to install a through-floor lift at St Peters Farmhouse, Main Street, Knapton, York YO26 6QG in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 22/01149/LBC dated 31 May 2022.

Preliminary Matter

2. As the appeal relates to listed building consent, I have had special regard to section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve a Grade II listed building, “St Peters Farm Cottage St Peters Farmhouse”, and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

4. The application sought consent to install a ‘Stiltz Duo+’ lift between the lounge and bedroom. The appellant explains that the works are necessary to enable him and his wife to continue living in their home in the longer-term.
5. The building was listed in 1979 (Ref 1190722) and included St Peters Farmhouse and the adjoining cottage. The Farmhouse appears to date from the eighteenth century. It is constructed from brick with a steeply pitched slate roof and had a ‘baffle-entry’ plan form. The listing description refers to the bressummer and fireplace, and chamfered ceiling beams to both storeys. The building was substantially refurbished after a period of dereliction in the 1970s. The refurbishment included altering the plan form, window and door replacement and other internal alterations. I find the special interest of the listed building, insofar as it relates to this appeal, to be primarily associated with its vernacular architecture, its former agricultural connections, its historic plan form and internal features.

6. The works to install the lift would require cutting and re-purposing part of two joists in the lounge and removing approximately one square metre of the lath and plaster ceiling. The Council considers the joists to be mid-eighteenth century and this part of the ceiling dates from the nineteenth century. The joists, approximately 1 metre in length, would be re-used as part of the trimming to secure the lift void. The lift rails and ceiling bracket would be secured to a piece of MDF board that would be attached to the bedroom ceiling.
7. The joists have bead-moulding, which indicates they are historic and were intended to remain visible but were later covered by lath and plaster. The appellant's Heritage Impact Assessment acknowledges the evidential and historical value of the joists, and the lath and plaster, as they demonstrate several phases of development and social change.
8. Although the works would lead to a loss of historic fabric, this does not automatically mean there would be resulting harm. Conservation is about managing change to a building in ways that sustain, reveal or reinforce its cultural and heritage values. The adaptation of a building over time is often apparent and this change can be neutral, positive or harmful depending on how it affects the special interest. It only becomes harmful if this is eroded.
9. The amount of fabric to be removed would be relatively small in the context of the listed building taken as a whole. The cut joists would be re-used, and the remainder of the joists would be retained. Furthermore, the majority of the historic ceiling would be retained as an evidential record. Overall, I do not consider the proposed works would affect the appreciation or understanding of the listed building or the matters that contribute to its significance as a designated heritage asset.
10. The lift would be visible within the lounge and bedroom, but it would be relatively compact and would not be readily apparent from outside of the property. It would clearly be a modern adaptation, and in my judgement, it would not have a harmful impact on the listed building or its setting.
11. Given the above, I conclude that the proposed works would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building, thus satisfying the requirements of the Act, paragraph 197 of the Framework and development plan policies insofar as relevant. Consequently, it is not necessary to consider the public benefits of the proposal.

Other Matters

12. I note that one of the occupants has a disability. Age and disability are 'relevant protected characteristics' for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). Hence, I must have due regard to the need, among other things, to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
13. The lift installation would enable the appellant and his wife to remain living in their home, and to continue to act as custodians for the listed building in the longer-term. This consideration would weigh significantly in favour of the proposal. However, as I have found there would be no harm to the special interest of the listed building, it is not necessary to carry out a specific assessment in relation to the PSED, as listed building consent will be granted for the proposed works.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Debbie Moore

Inspector